546 as the opera of the same name, won first prize among the thirty-eight entries at the Communist International Motion-Picture Festival in Czechoslovakia in 1951. The Concentration Camp at Shangjao, produced in 1951, describes the life of the "patriotic people" in the Kuomintang concentration camp, and, according to the Communist reviewers, successfully demonstrates the "collective heroism" of the Communists under duress. When the rural production drive was about to begin in 1954, the movie Good Harvest was timed to be shown to the peasants during the festivities of the lunar New Year in order to emphasize the importance of increasing the output of the land. The People on the Grassland is a movie about the Mongols in Inner Mongolia. Sound tracks in the Mongol and Uigur languages have been made so that this picture may be circulated among the ethnic minorities. Similar movies about the ethnic minorities in the Southwest are likely to be made in the future.

III. ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

A. Painting and the Plastic Arts

532 Painting and the plastic arts are largely utilitarian in China today. The utilitarian spirit puts them either in the realm of propaganda or craftsmanship. As propaganda, they become extremely derivative and stereotyped; as craftsmanship, they utilize local characteristics and traditional skills, although they sometimes appear to be unrestrainedly florid and pretentious. Chinese brush paintings, woodcuts, oil paintings, cartoons

1: Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF 16 SW China AF16

chalk drawings, and posters are entries in most of the art exhibitions. Among these categories, ceramic figures and wood-carvings represent local craftsmanship and are little influenced by Communist ideology. Other art forms have used Communist policies and slogans as themes for depiction. Woodcuts, sculptures, and water colors seemed to have been more easily adapted to the new themes than oil paintings and the traditional Chinese brush paintings. The oil paintings done by Chinese artists usually lack imagination in composition; at their best, they are only near-photographic depictions of political activities. Traditional brush-painting technique is at its best in landscape paintings and in depicting rural life and is ill-adapted to the illustration of modern people and their activities. No prominent artists in oil or water color have emerged under the Communist regime. 532

Under the general principle, "Accept the heritage of the world," artists like Rembrandt and Leonardo da Vinci are commemorated and reproductions like that of the Mona Lisa are used in literary and art journals.

B. Woodcuts

The woodcut, a traditional art in China, is used to adorn story books. Lu Hsün was the first to renew popular interest in this art. Woodcuts became popular in Yenan during the war against Japan because their creation does not require eleaborate equipment. Many people remember the lively wood cuts of the Liberated Areas, which showed the influence of Western woodscuts. Woodcuts are popular in Communist China; there is a tendency to incorporate the

532 traditional Chinese woodcut style in the illustration of Communist themes, and there are elaborate woodcuts in multiple colors, a technique which antedates the Yenan period. In recent woodcuts, rural life is more effectively presented than blast furnaces or anti-U.S. activities.

C. New Year's Pictures (Nien-hua)

In those Chinese households which have not been influenced by the West, a new picture is hung or pasted on the wall on every New Year's Eve to assure a prosperous and peaceful year ahead. The pictures are called nien-hua. New Year's pictures are exploited by the Communists as a means to secure people's consent and support for their regime. The traditional themes of superstitious propitiation to gods has been transmogrified to praise of Mao Tse-tung for bringing happiness and prosperity to the people, to celebration of the Long March of the Red Army, the distribution of the land certificates after the land reform, the woman train-conductor, or the "great meeting of Stalin and Mao Tse-tung."[23]

The Communists have boasted of a tremendous sale of the "new" nien-hua in the last few years. The production and printing of the nien-hua are now done entirely by Communist publishing houses, and the Chinese people have no way of buying their traditional nien-hua. The aesthetic value of the nien-hua is practically nil, but it utilizes so well the traditional customs, beliefs, and sayings of the people that its messages are immediately understandable and are apt to be accepted.

23. People's Pictorial, February 1951.

D. Comic Strips (Lien-huna t'u-hua)

●532 The Chinese comic strip is neither literature nor art, but it borrows a little from both to enable the barely literate to entertain themselves with stories. The Communists, knowing the popularity of the comic strip among children, women, and the uneducated, have used it to teach "patriotism," sanitation, and health. They regard earlier comic strips as "feudalistic" and superstitious, and have replaced them with those which are "new, healthy, and educational." The new comic strips, created by artists recruited and guided by the Communists, are seen at street corners, and in factories, villages, armies, and schools.

The Communists claim that the sale of comic strips is increasing daily. The Lien-ho Bookstore in Shanghai, which handles the new comic strips, reports the sale of more than 600,000 volumes in January 1951, and more than one million volumes in the following April. The comic strip periodical Lien-huan Hua-pao is reported to have a circulation of 400,000 copies.

The most representative and most publicized new comic strip is The Letter with a Chicken Feather,[24] which uses 243 pictures to "give the Chinese children a patriotic education." The story concerns a young boy who, after receiving a Communist education, successfully fulfilled the "heroic" task of delivering an important message to anti-Japanese guerrilla force. It is claimed

24. It was a traditional practice to include a chicken feather with an urgent message, signifying the letter's importance and need for its safekeeping.

532 that more than 58,000 copies of The Letter with a Chicken Feather have been sold.

E. Dance

535 China proper does not have any distinctive form of dancing, although yang-ko is sometimes considered native to China. Yang-ko is a combination of signing and dancing, derived from the song pattern of peasants who sing in groups antiphonically when working in the rice-fields. The dance steps revolve around a basic pattern, that is, two steps forward and one step back, which resembles the movements of the peasants as they work in the fields. In village festivals, yang-ko is sometimes performed, but it became truly popular only after the reform of literature and art in 1942, when the Communists used the dance to propagate new ideas in Shensi, and later in North China. It was brought to different parts of China in time to greet the advancing People's Liberation Army. The opera The White-haired Girl was based on singing and dancing forms of the yang-ko; and a the first stage of land reform this opera was utilized by the Communist cadres in many different parts of China to stir up class struggles in villages. The vogue of yang-ko in East China now seems to be over. The sophisticated cadres seem to prefer the new opera to yang-ko, and Western forms of social dancing to yang-ko steps.

The Chinese Communists have always fostered any art form that would assist their revolution. In 1950, Hsien Hsing-hai's Production

2: Rock K-5 (1934-) 1947 AF16 Southwest China

● 532

PLATE 48. — THE STATUE OF YANG SHEN

楊 慎 塑 像

In the Shrine of Mao Yü and Yang Shen adjoining P'u-hsien Ssu, across the lake, west of K'un-ming.

[p. 76p]

2: Rock K-5 (1934-) 1947 AF16 Southwest China

769
532

PLATE 49.—THE ANCESTRAL TABLET OF YANG SHEN

楊慎肖像

[p. 108 A]

2: Rock K-5 (1934-) 1947 AF16 Southwest China AF16

778
532

PLATE 63. — CHEOS-KYI-HBYUNG-GNAS

The Guru Karma-pa who visited Li-chiang. After a painting from the Yü-feng Ssu (Jade-peak Lamasery) at the foot of the Yü-kung Shan.

[p. 108-0]

2; Rock K-5 (1934-) 1947 AF16 Southwest China AF16

532
776

PLATE 245. — LION MOUNTAIN GODDESS SENG-GE GA-MU

太空獅子山山女神雪巴

She rides a hind and is patroness of Yung-ning. From a Tibetan painting made in Lha-sa. To the left, near her hand holding a flute, is Lion Mountain; lower left, Yung-ning lake with two ducks. Above her in center is Amitabha.

[p. 458 E]

6: Tafel--344 T-3 (1905-1908) 1914 AJ1 Tibet
SW. China AF16
Plate LI.

/216C/.

Conquest of the towers of Ragu (Chinese: La ku) on the Kunser Mountain (Great Kin tschuan) in the year 1775 by the Chinese under General Akuei. (Contemporary Chinese copper plate print. The original copper plate was damaged, it is now found in the Ethnological Museum in Berlin. Size of original: 88 by 51 centimeters.)